

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 10978

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TAGS: PFOR, UR, UK

SUBJECT: SOVIET-UK CONSULTATIONS

REF: MOSCOW 10640

1. BRITISH FCO OFFICIALS HELD BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS WITH THEIR SOVIET COUNTERPARTS IN MOSCOW JULY 24 AND 25. THE TALKS COVERED THE MIDDLE EAST, EAST ASIA, THE UN, DISARMAMENT AND POLICY PLANNING. ACCORDING TO THE UK EMBOFFS WHO TOOK PART IN THE MEETINGS, THESE WERE THE FIRST SUCH EXTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS THE BRITISH HAVE HAD WITH THE SOVIETS, ALTHOUGH THE TWO SIDES MET LAST SEPTEMBER TO DISCUSS UN MATTERS.

2. ON THE MIDDLE EAST, ASSISTANT UNDERSECRETARY MICHAEL WEIR MET WITH MIKHAIL SYTENKO, CHIEF, AND YEVGINIY PYRLIN, DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE NEAR EASTERN COUNTRIES DIVISION (REFTEL). ON UN AFFAIRS, WEIR MET WITH VIKTOR ISRAELYAN, CHIEF AND VALENTIN LOZINSKIY, DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DIVISION. ON PLANNING, ASSISTANT UNDERSECRETARY JAMES CABLE AND FIRST SECRETARY MASEFIELD MET WITH IVAN IL'ICHEV AND SERGEI TIKHVINSKIY, DEPUTY CHIEFS OF THE ADMINISTRATION FOR FOREIGN POLICY PLANNING. ON DISARMAMENT, ASSISTANT UNDERSECRETARY JOHN THOMSON AND HEAD OF THE DISARMAMENT DEPARTMENT JOHN EDMONDS MET WITH ISRAELYAN AND HIS SENIOR
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DEPUTY FOR DISARMAMENT, ROLAND TIMERBAYEV. ON EAST ASIA,

BRITISH HEAD OF FAR EAST DEPARTMENT WILLIAM BENTLEY MET WITH MIKHAIL KAPITSA, CHIEF OF THE FIRST FAR EAST DIVISION, TO DISCUSS CHINA AND KOREA, AND WITH IVAN SHPEDKO, CHIEF OF THE SECOND FAR EASTERN DIVISION, TO DISCUSS JAPAN. BRIAN CARTLEDGE, HEAD OF THE EAST EUROPEAN AND SOVIET DEPARTMENT ARRANGED THE CONSULTATIONS AND ACCOMPANIED THE OTHERS TO MOSCOW.

3. ON THE SUBSTANCE OF MOST OF THE ISSUES DISCUSSED, THE SOVIET COMMENTS DID NOT VARY FROM THE LINES WE HAVE HEARD OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS, AND IN SEVERAL CASES THE TERMINOLOGY WAS IDENTICAL. THE BRITISH MADE STRONG PITCHES FOR STABILITY IN KOREA AND AGAINST ANY MOVES TO OUST ISRAEL FROM THE UN. THE SOVIETS COUNTERED IN BOTH CASES WITH ARGUMENTS FOR PROGRESS TOWARD PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE DISPUTES. WE ASSUME THAT DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN BRIEFED IN DETAIL ON THE EXCHANGES.

4. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO CONSIDER INITIATION OF SIMILAR U.S.-SOVIET EXCHANGES. GIVEN INTERCONTINENTAL DISTANCES AND DIFFICULTY OF FREEING TOP WASHINGTON OFFICIALS EN MASSE FOR SUCH A TRAJECTORY, WE WOULD ADVISE INDIVIDUAL TRIPS TO MOSCOW IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER SCHEDULED VISITS, EITHER TO MOSCOW OR TO AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY WITHIN STRIKING DISTANCE (EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST, SOUTH AND EAST ASIA). FOR INSTANCE, WINSTON LORD MIGHT (AND IN OUR VIEW WOULD) FIND A MEETING WITH SOVIET COUNTERPARTS WHO DEAL WITH PLANNING WORTHWHILE IF INCLUDED IN ITINERARY OF UPCOMING HIGH-LEVEL TRAVELS. OTHER S/P MEMBERS MIGHT JOIN HIM HERE IF HE WISHED TO EMPHASIZE "PLANNING" CHARACTER OF MEETING. SUCH EXCHANGES WOULD OF COURSE BE MOST USEFUL TO EMBASSY: THEY WOULD FOLLOW NATURALLY ON RECENT PATTERN OF WIDENING EXCHANGES WITH MFA AND WOULD CONSOLIDATE IT TO OUR BENEFIT. AT THE SAME TIME, WE FEEL SUCH EXCHANGES WOULD BE AT LEAST INTERESTING AND OFTEN ENLIGHTENING TO BOTH WASHINGTON AND SOVIET PARTICIPANTS. WHILE RESULTS WOULD CERTAINLY BE UNEVEN, MULTIPLICATION OF CONTACTS AT TOP WORKING LEVEL COULD ONLY SERVE TO STRENGTHEN WEB OF VESTED INTERESTS ON SOVIET SIDE.
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